A Rod
for the Back of
the Binder

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A ROD FOR THE BACK OF THE BINDER

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Some Considerations of Book Binding With Reference to the Ideals of The Lakeside Press

The Primary Object of Binding a Book Is to Preserve It. The Merit of a Binding, Primitively Its Sole and Always Its Chief Merit, Consists in Its Solidity and Durability.—WEALE.

The Lakeside Press
R. R. Donnelley & Sons Company
Chicago : 1929

PREFACE

THE *Extra Binding Department of The Lakeside Press was established in* 1921 *with the idea that there was a place for a bindery whose standard was simply the best that could be done. We issued a book in* 1925 *declaring our principles and showing the manner of our decoration at that time, and present here our later work up to and including the year* 1927.

Our preference is for simple tooling, although this book shows some elaborate work. It is not possible to show the quality of the forwarding (i.e. *the binding itself*) *in an illustration, hence the tendency of the binder to show his skill in elaborate tooling.*

Notable books on book binding are almost entirely on the subject of decoration, its history, bibliography, and identifications with certain binders of the past. The subject of forwarding is touched on only lightly. A real forwarder with a feeling for fine binding and judgment in the details of his work is extremely rare.

A finely bound book with a good choice of leather is a thing of beauty in itself, and needs from the designer and finisher a great deal of thought and a small amount of tooling to make it a work of art.

The subject matter of this book treats binding from a new angle, describing those book binding details concerning which mistaken ideas exist or in which bad binding practices are prevalent. These notes were written from the standpoint of the causes of defects developed in a binding when on the bookshelf in an American home. When Mr. de Sauty had read them, he exclaimed, "You are giving them a rod with which to beat us." So be it. Nothing could be better than a clientele of well-armed critics helping us to maintain that standard of quality which we have set up as our practice.

R. R. Donnelley & Sons Company

Chicago, 1929

A ROD FOR THE BACK OF THE BINDER

FINE binding is known as "extra" binding, meaning extra workmanship and extra quality of materials. It is to extra binding that the following notes are devoted. The large proportion of extra bound books found in American homes has been bought already bound from book sellers. The American bookseller buys these books abroad where certain large binderies combine a binding and bookselling business. They buy old books, often clean and wash them and make them otherwise vendible, and bind for their stock, probably eighty per cent of which goes to America. On very valuable books, that is books worth several hundred dollars, their work is likely to be in accordance with the best binding practice. On less valuable books, that is books worth less than one hundred dollars, a compromise enters into their constructional methods.

Most American collectors owning large and valuable libraries have, in the past, sent their books for binding to these same foreign firms. There are also a few individual or studio binders abroad who handle some of the American collectors' work and some of whom do the finest work obtainable. There

are practically no extra binders in America. All of our own adult craftsmen have come direct from England.

The great majority of buyers and even notable book collectors know little of binding construction and judge by appearance only. Others buy with some surface knowledge, but with no appreciation of the underlying principles on such points as freedom of joints, proper opening qualities, absence of warp in the covers; all important advantages, which, however, are sometimes achieved by methods detrimental to the binding. In order to discuss these binding principles, it is necessary to use some technicalities, but these have been kept as simple as possible and explained by drawings.

SEWING—GOOD AND BAD

Sewing is the foundation of good binding. In the older work the sewing was generally round five cords or "bands," in large folios sometimes six or seven and in small volumes three or four cords. These cords were frayed out at the ends and laced into the boards, making a rugged but strong and lasting binding.

FIG. 1

Fraying is done by untwisting the strands of the sewing cords and teasing them out into their constituent long silky fibres (*fig.* 1).

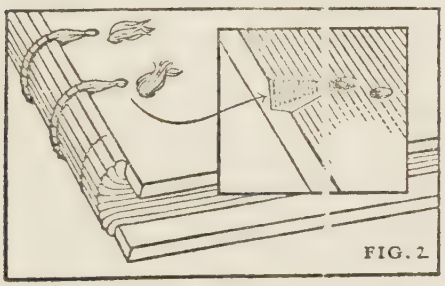


FIG. 2

This is done to enable the cords to lie flat on the edge of the boards where laced in; the boards are punched with two holes for each cord and a slight V-shaped groove is cut

in the edge of the board next the book (*fig.* 2); the frayed ends are then pasted and drawn through the first hole and then passed up through the second hole after which the end is cut off and securely fastened. The groove and the fraying minimize the lump which would otherwise occur at this point.

FLEXIBLE SEWING

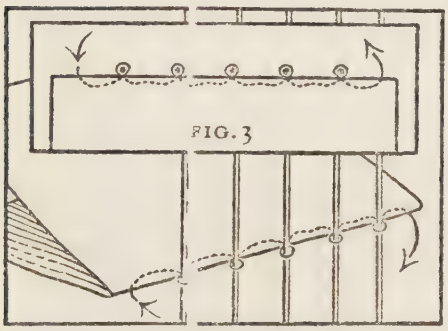


FIG. 3

The sewing referred to above is known as "flexible" sewing and, as will be seen from the sketch (*fig.* 3), ensures each signature of the book being directly attached to the cords five times. The cords are stretched on a sewing "frame" (*fig.* 4). The thread enters at one end of the signature, goes round each cord in turn, comes out at the opposite end and forms what is known as the "kettle" stitch (a corruption of the words "catch up" stitch) thence into the next signature and so on through the complete book. It may be of interest to know that the sewing frames we use are identical with those in use in the sixteenth century. In very large folios double cords are used (*fig.* 5). These cords, whether single or double, form the ridges or raised "bands" apparent on the backbone of the book.

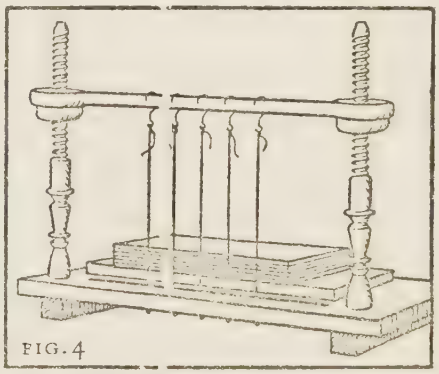


FIG. 4

FIG. 5

HEADBAND

In some cases the "headband" is sewn on an extra cord at the head and tail of the book, the ends being laced into the boards.

The headband serves to strengthen the leather and take the strain incurred in removing a book from the shelves

In the majority of modern work the headband is no longer sewn on the body of the book, but is merely a piece of imitation woven material stuck on and serving no useful purposes.

ORDINARY SEWING

In a desire to save time and cheapen production cost, what is known as "ordinary" sewing was devised. In this case instead of the customary five cords, three (and frequently only two grooves) are sawed into the back of the book, cords are stretched in these grooves below the surface of the backbone and the sewing is done over instead of round the cords (*fig.* 6).

FIG. 6

This method of sewing is weak inasmuch as the book is no longer directly attached to the cords as in flexible sewing; the number of cords is fewer thus entailing fewer holds.

Other objectionable points are:

I. The sawn grooves which show when the book is opened.

II. The entry of the glue used in later stages into these grooves, which stiffens the back and impairs its flexibility.

PLATE I. "CORIDON'S SONG." "SIR RICHARD'S DAUGHTER"—DANIEL PRESS.
MAUVE LEVANT. GOLD TOOLED.

In the case of books sewn ordinary fashion and sometimes rebound and resewn again in the same way (very often with new grooves) this method offers very serious problems to any succeeding binder anxious to do his best. Either costly repairs are necessary or the grooves are left. These grooves may be found sometimes in flexibly sewn work, a relic of previous binders.

FALSE BANDS

A further objectionable feature entailed by this method of sewing is the addition of "false" bands. False bands consist usually of five narrow strips of leather or pasteboard stuck on to the back after sewing to imply after the leather cover has been drawn over them that the regulation number of cords has been used and the book flexibly sewed (*fig.* 7); further, these bands are stuck on to what is known as a "hollow" back (discussed later).

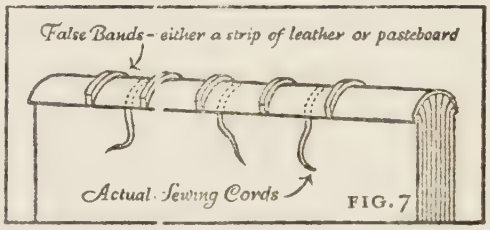


FIG. 7

A very cursory examination of a binding will reveal its method of sewing.

The lacing in of the ends of the cords to the boards causes a series of slight swellings or bumps to show under the leather cover.

In the case of flexible sewing one bump will show at the hinge of the cover coinciding with and indicating each actual cord or raised band and one bump slightly lower and further in will indicate where the loose end has been re-laced for strength.

In a book sewn by the ordinary method, bumps will often appear where there are no cords, a certain evidence of false bands.

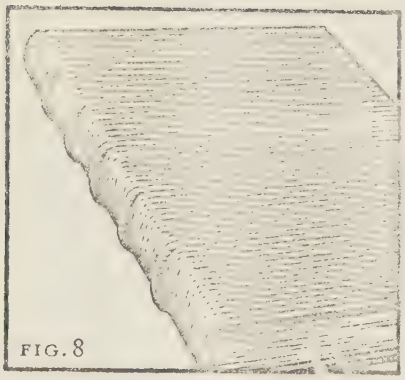


FIG. 8

Fewer bumps than bands will appear, showing clearly the number of cords used in contradiction of the five false bands on the back (*fig.* 8).

These bumps are the best evidence of sewing methods and should be noticeable, but should not be so prominent as to cause abrasion of the leather at these points. The bumps in the above drawing have been exaggerated to emphasize this point. (To further economize it is sometimes customary to cut off the ends of some of the cords after sewing and lace in a minimum of two or three only, still further weakening construction.)

Frequently, to meet one of the buyer's mistaken demands for neatness, the greater part of the strands on each cord are cut off and the remainder extravagantly frayed out, greatly impairing its strength. Since some of these cords are cut off altogether to minimize time in lacing in, it is easy to realize what construction sacrificed to neatness, at this point (*fig.* 9) entails.

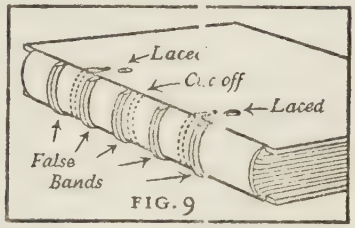


FIG. 9

The substitution of ordinary for flexible sewing is entirely to save cost, for, with ordinary sewing, considerable time can be saved in the subsequent processes of "rounding and backing" as well as in the sewing itself.

ROUNDING

Rounding is the shaping (by hammering) of the back into a curved form and is preparatory to backing.

PLATE II. CHAUCER'S WORKS—KELMSCOTT PRESS. BROWN LEVANT. BLIND TOOLED.

The rounding determines the shape of the back (*fig.* 10). The amount of round and subsequent backing has some relation to the opening qualities.

The extremes are the semi-circular back (*a*) much favored by the French binders and the square flat back (*b*) used in some

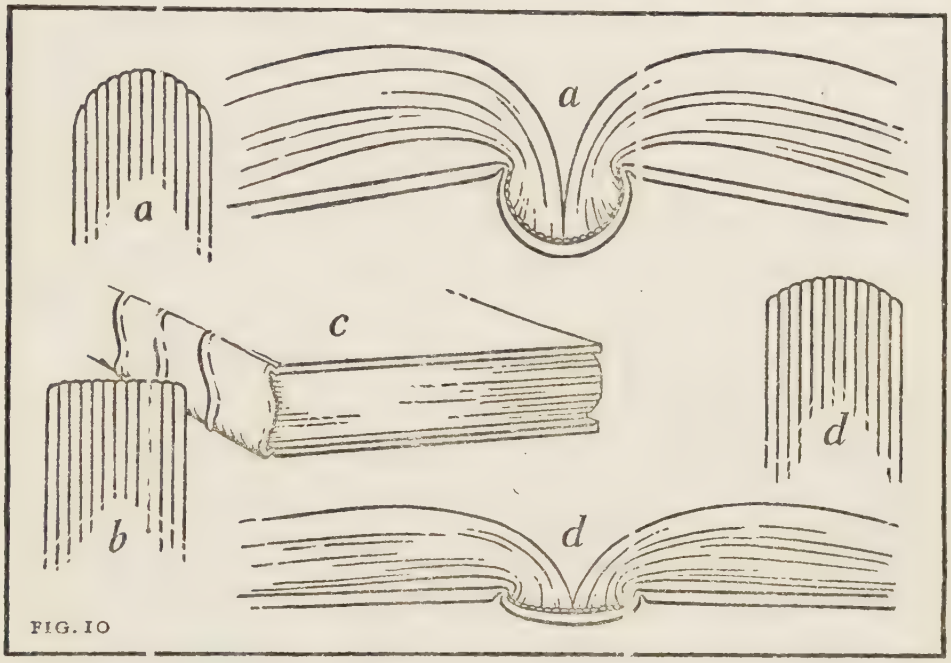


FIG. 10

cases by certain English binders; much of Cobden-Sanderson's earlier work has a square back. The former shape renders a book difficult to open and lay flat while the latter (on large books particularly) although opening well is liable to cave in and project the book beyond its boards on the fore-edge (*c*). A happy medium is recommended as in (*d*).

In the case of a flexibly sewn book the leather cover is drawn over the back and stuck directly to the bands and back of the book; that is, the cover is flexible with the book when it is opened.

HOLLOW BACK

Most ordinary sewn books are made with a "hollow" back. The hollow back is made by lining up the back (after sewing) with folds of paper on top of which the false bands are stuck, and the book is then covered.

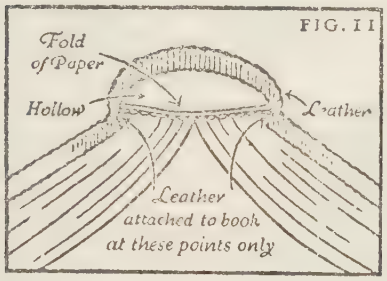


FIG. 11

The book when opened then throws up the hollow supporting the leather, which does not wrinkle. But it will be seen that the leather is no longer an intimate or integral part of the book (*fig.* 11) as it is in a flexibly sewn book (*fig.* 12).

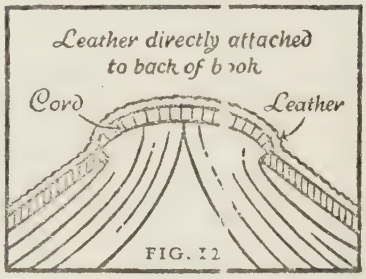


FIG. 12

Since the hollow back is an obvious sacrifice of construction it is undesirable.

To further imitate flexibly sewn work the hollow back is sometimes omitted, the back lined up very stiffly with thick paper, the false bands put on this and the book covered. This makes the book so stiff that it is necessary to use a considerable amount of force in opening it.

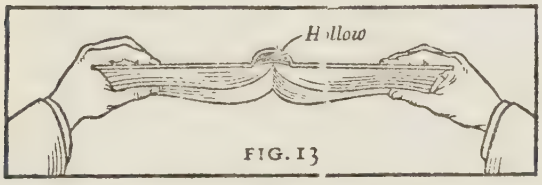


FIG. 13

Books sewn by the ordinary method are always bound in one or other of the above two methods, generally the hollow back. One can easily detect the hollow back by opening the book wide and looking down the backbone from the top; the hollow back will show an open space running right down the book between the leather cover and the back of the book (*fig.* 13).

PLATE III. BROWN LEVANT. BLIND AND GOLD TOOLED.

The flexibly sewn book cannot do this as the leather is firmly fastened to the whole of the back of the book instead of at the hinges only.

PANELS

In general practice, bands are usually regularly spaced; this divides the back into six distinct panels; the lowest panel is purposely arranged to be slightly longer than the others, otherwise, owing to an optical illusion, it would appear shorter (*fig.* 14).

FIG. 14

Some variation in spacing is sometimes adapted, and is arrived at by eliminating some sewing cords and grouping the remainder differently from the orthodox spacing. This is usually done with a view to making construction conform to design

BUILT UP BANDS

A flexibly sewn book has an obvious ruggedness of appearance, the bands look as if they were really made up of a round cord and they should not be unduly pinched up in covering to imitate something square as is often the case. An absurd fash on recurs from time to time of building up the bands very high with strips of leather or cardboard before covering (*fig.* 15); a great amount of time and trouble is wasted in trying to create an impression of great strength. Bands so treated are just a pretense and somewhat of a danger, for owing to their height and squareness they are more likely to suffer from a blow than are the softly rounded contours of a real cord band. They are uncomfortable

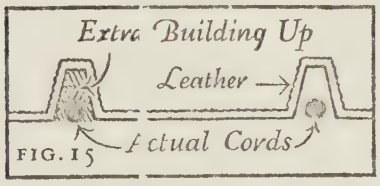


FIG. 15

PLATE IV. "ETCHINGS OF F. S. HADEN." DARK GREEN LEVANT. INLAID AND GOLD TOOLED.

to handle and only stiffen the cords where flexibility is desirable. An examination of any old bindings of the 15th or 16th century will demonstrate the directness of methods and absence of pretense in those days.

SEWING ON TAPES

Sewing on flat tapes is an excellent method in the case of thick, heavy books and especially so on books of reference likely to be handled considerably: such as dictionaries, music, atlases, etc.

Flat tapes are used in place of cords; these admit of very free opening and since there are no projecting bands, the back is subjected to less wear.

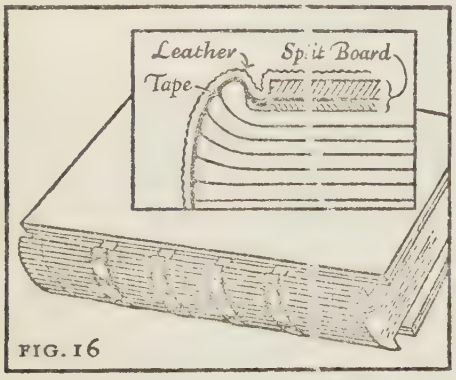


FIG. 16

The ends of the tapes should be inserted between and stuck to split boards (made by sticking a thick and a thin board together (*fig.* 16). This with a cloth joint sewn on inside, combined with what is known as a French joint outside makes a very strong, serviceable binding. The French joint consists in keeping the boards a slight distance away from the shoulder of the book. This leaves a groove and room for leather of full thickness in the joint.

END PAPERS

The end papers, which form a buffer at each end of the book, should be liberal in number and should be sewn to the cords with the book and not merely tipped or pasted on.

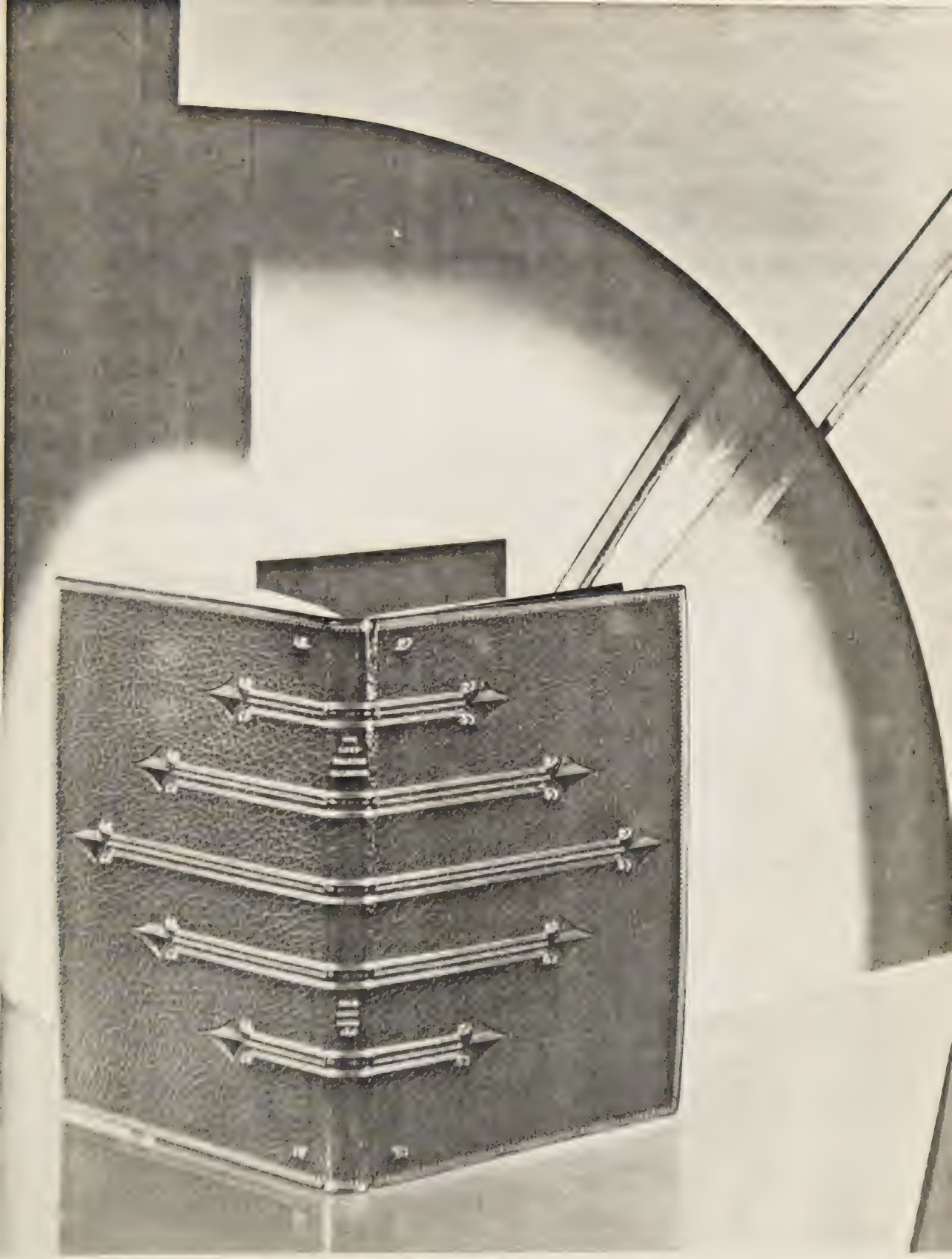


PLATE V. "SHEPHEARDE'S CALENDAR"—KELMSCOTT PRESS. OLIVE GREEN LEVANT. INLAID AND GOLD TOOLED.

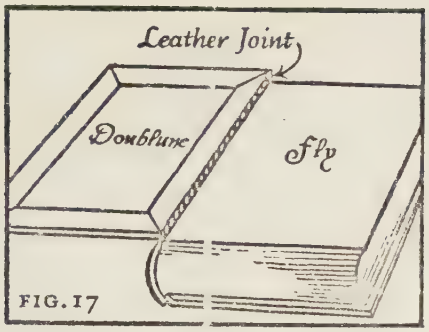


FIG. 17

Leather (or cloth) joints are used in work which warrants the extra cost involved. These again should be sewn on with the book (*fig.* 17). Leather flies are a luxury fittingly used with leather "doublures" (board linings).

BACKING

Backing is the forming (by hammering) of the shoulder to receive the boards. To back a flexibly sewn book calls for a high degree of craftsmanship and considerable time as compared with backing an ordinary sewn book.

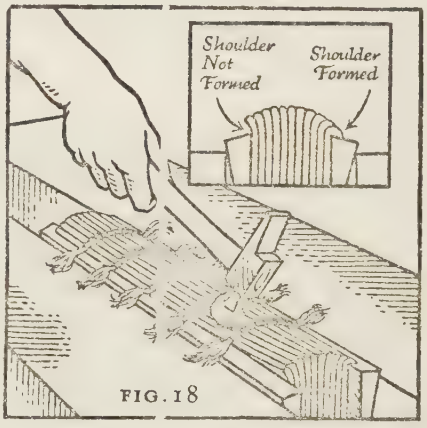


FIG. 18

Backing consists of taking the book after rounding, placing it in a press between backing boards and by driving blows with a hammer, forcing the back of the book to either side of the center (*fig.* 18). This creates the shoulder or joint for the boards. In flexibly sewn work this requires extreme care and neatness owing to the projecting bands.

PAPER

Paper is a determining factor in the opening qualities of a binding. Many publishers stretch a small book into a large one by the use of paper too bulky and stiff in relation to page size to admit of flexibility. A book printed with the grain of the paper running parallel to the backbone opens more freely when bound.

PLATE VI. KEPPEL'S "HANDBOOK ON ETCHERS." HALF BINDINGS. JAPANESE PAPER SIDES.

TRIMMING AND TREATING EDGES

Trimming should be as sparing as possible; the tops cut just enough to obtain a solid edge for gilding; fore-edges and tails either uncut or trimmed as little as may be to save destroying marginal proportions.

Many books, and practically all the private press books issued today are printed on unevenly folded papers having a very rough deckle which in time becomes nothing but a dust trap and unsightly. In binding, a certain amount of hand trimming (before sewing) of the roughest of the deckle on the fore-edge and tail is desirable, always leaving some untrimmed pages, known as "proof" sheets, as evidence of a regard for margins. Uncut folded sheets should be opened, but with the owner's permission only, for a "desirable unopened copy" has to be respected!

EDGE GILDING

The purpose of gilding is to keep out dust and dirt. Gilding the top serves this very useful purpose and allows of easy dusting; the fore-edge and tail need not be gilt as no useful purpose is attained.

The highly burnished solid gilt edges of a book gilt all round we believe is very poor taste; the fact that a book is composed of single sheets is lost sight of in the desire to obtain what has often been described as a "brass bedstead" effect. To get a surface smooth enough to solid gilt, undue cutting of the edges is necessary and margins are sacrificed. If desired the fore-edge and tail may be rough gilt before sewing, and fine books are often treated this way.

PLATE VII. "JARDIN DES GEMMES," WITH ILLUSTRATIONS IN COLOR.
OLIVE GREEN LEVANT. INLAID AND GOLD TOOLED.

Books with thick signatures and books with plates should not be gilt all round as they are liable to show starts, especially on the fore-edge (*fig.* 19).

FIG. 19

Plates are usually printed on an entirely different paper than that used in the body of the book and have a tendency to shrink or expand at a different ratio.

Paper again is a factor in gilding; most hand made and good class machine made papers gild well but the softer bulk and cheap grade show a fluffy or ragged surface when gilded.

Brown stain burnished is suitable and pleasant on some types of binding and goes well with quietly bound books finished with "blind" tooling.

SQUARES

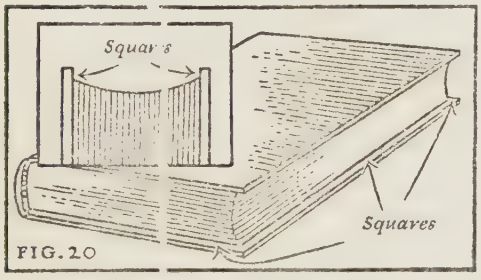


FIG. 20

The squares of a binding are the amount of board projecting from the three edges. The prime object of the square is to protect the edges (*fig.* 20). A large square, however, is more liable to give to a blow than a small one with the natural buffer or fender of the book behind it. The French binders use a small square, Cobden-Sanderson advocated and preferred one, and so do we.

THE LEATHER COVER

The demand for high finish and unnecessary neatness results in some of the worst features in modern work and these will be apparent in considering the leather cover and its true functions. The hinge is the most exercised part of the binding. To make

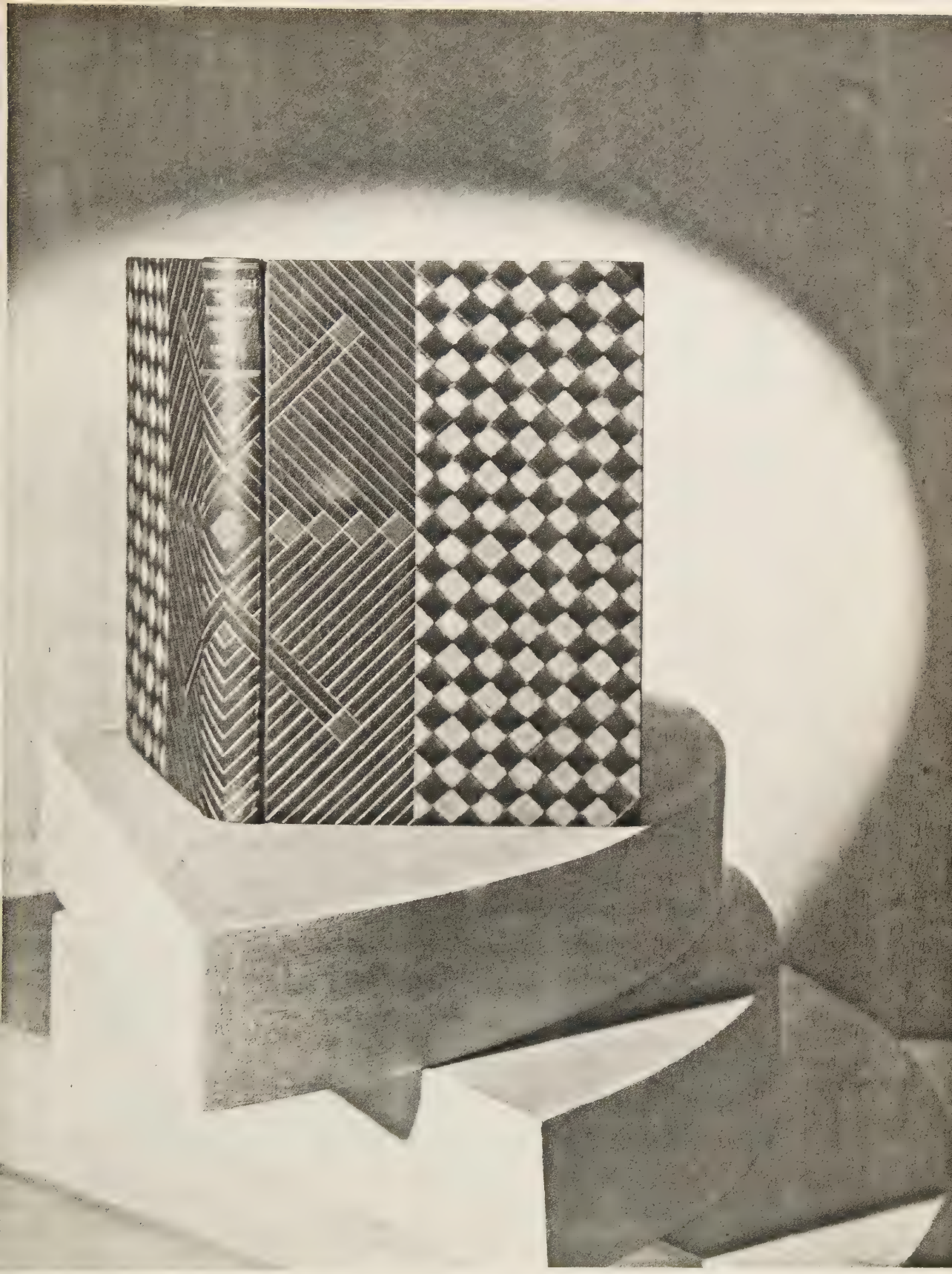


PLATE VIII. "JAHRBUCH DER EINBANDKUNST." HALF BLACK LEVANT. INLAID AND GOLD TOOLED. PAPER SIDES.

a neat joint and good opening qualities, it is necessary to pare or scrape the leather at the hinge or joint, but it is often unduly pared at great loss of strength to meet the desire for a freely swinging board.

A test sometimes applied is to see whether the boards will touch freely in the position shown in the sketch (*fig.* 21).

A book which causes the boards to touch (or nearly touch) when held in this position indicates that the leather is too thinly pared in the joint and liable to early breakage.

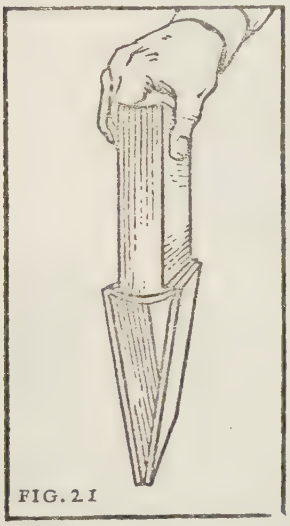


FIG. 21

A little sacrifice of neatness here will result in a corresponding gain in the length of life in a joint, usually the first place to show signs of wear. A book which opens at the joint too freely will not last. Paring must be done with discretion and due regard paid to the amount taken off in relation to the size of the book. It should be as little as possible.

Another point where excessive sharpness is looked for is the turn-in of the leather over the edges of the boards; this has to take a great deal of wear and tear, especially on the tail-edge (lower end of book).

The very slightest rasping of the edges of the board before covering will permit the use of thicker leather with an added gain in strength (*fig.* 22)

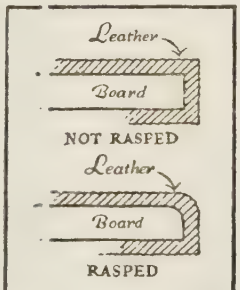


FIG. 22

The leather coming over the bands and back should not be over pared, for the thicker the leather the more protection to the foundation of the binding; the

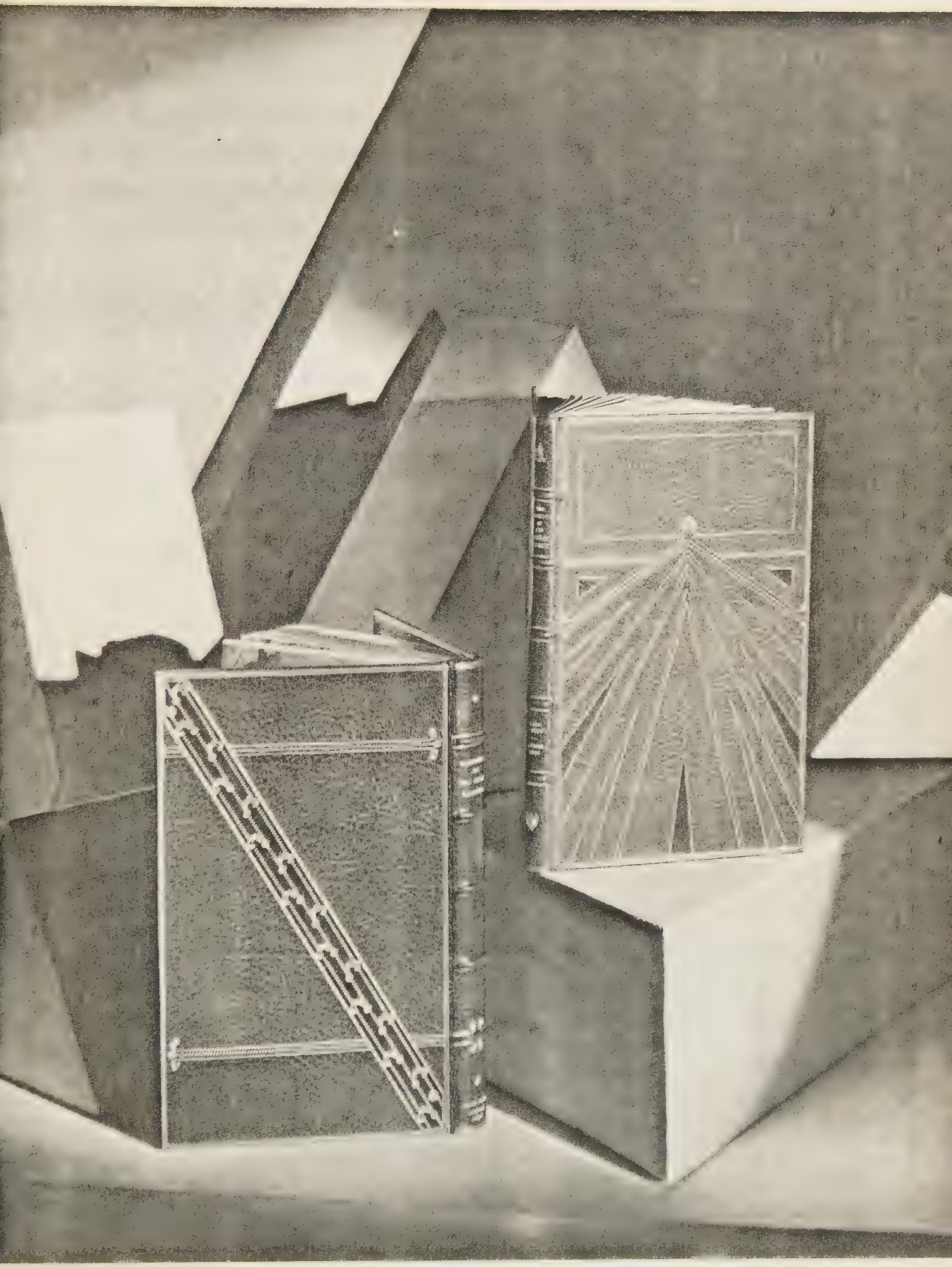


PLATE IX. LEFT: "NIMPHIDIA"—VALE PRESS. RIGHT: "SONNETS OF SIR PHILIP SIDNEY"—VALE PRESS. GREEN LEVANT, INLAID AND GOLD TOOLED.

sewing. An examination of some old bindings will reveal the use of practically full thickness of leather on the back and elsewhere. The cover, while damp, was tied down with strings to allow the leather to adhere to and conform with the bands when dry (*fig.* 23). The strings left their impression above and below the bands and to a certain extent just over on to the side.

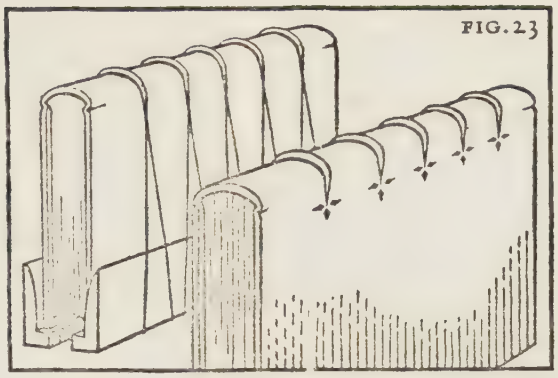


FIG. 23

These marks are sometimes pleasantly used as decoration by extending them, as illustrated, and finishing them with a stamp; a style of decoration now known as "tied" bands, but decoration subservient to construction.

LEATHER

The leathers most frequently used in book binding are goatskin, known as Morocco, Levant and Niger calfskin, known as Calf and known in England as Russia; pigskin, sealskin and sheepskin, known as Skiver, Roan and what not. Goatskin, pigskin and sealskin, if properly prepared, make fine binding leathers.

Calfskin does not wear so well and we do not recommend its use. It is largely used as it is cheaper, works up more easily, can be bought in a great variety of beautiful colors and takes a polish that makes it a very flashy binding.

Few extra binderies use sheepskin in any form. The finest binding leathers all come from abroad.

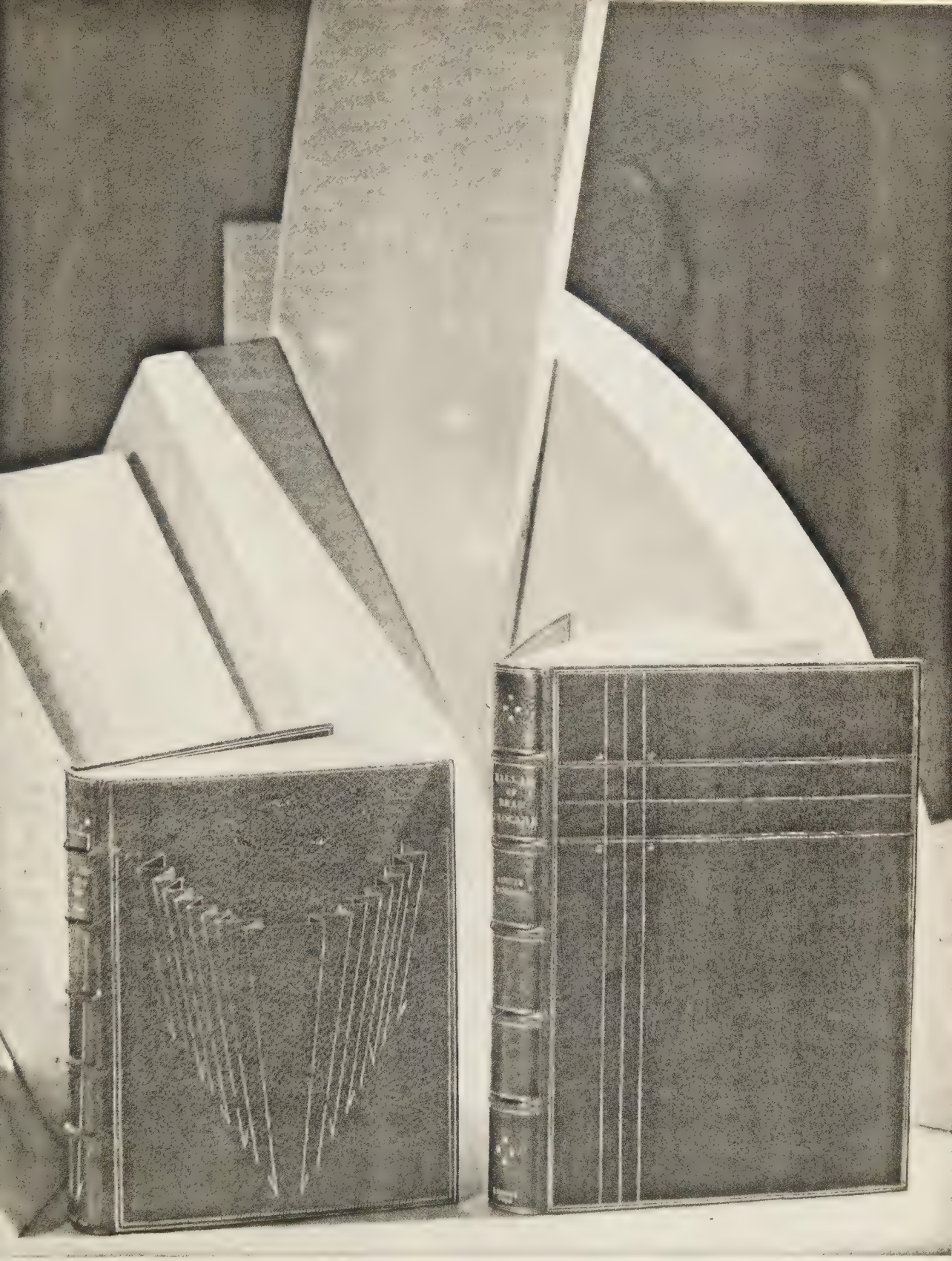
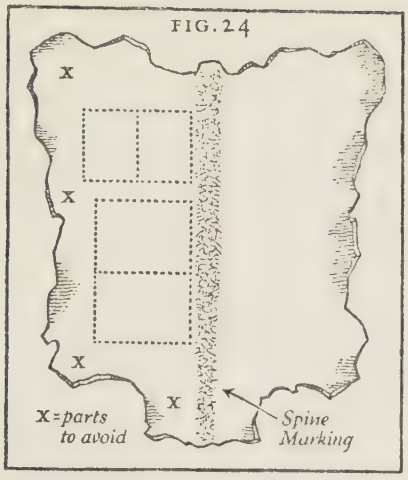


PLATE X. LEFT: "GENTLE ART OF MAKING ENEMIES"—WHISTLER. GREEN LEVANT.
RIGHT: "BALLAD OF BEAU BROCADE"—AUSTIN DOBSON.
RED LEVANT. INLAID AND GOLD TOOLED.



Large skins cut out more economically than small ones, but owing to their thickness large skins have to be unmercifully pared for small books with a great loss of strength; for this reason covers for small books should be cut from smaller skins. The back and sides give the best leather while that from the flanks, neck and legs is much looser of texture and less strong. *Covers should be cut from the best parts* (*fig.* 24).

The spine on a skin is usually quite marked. In cutting a cover a concession to appearance is made by avoiding this marking; it is a natural one and in no way detracts from strength. On large books it is almost impossible to cut a cover without including it and it is not without decorative effect if discreetly placed (*fig.* 25).

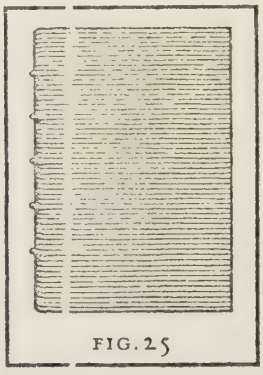


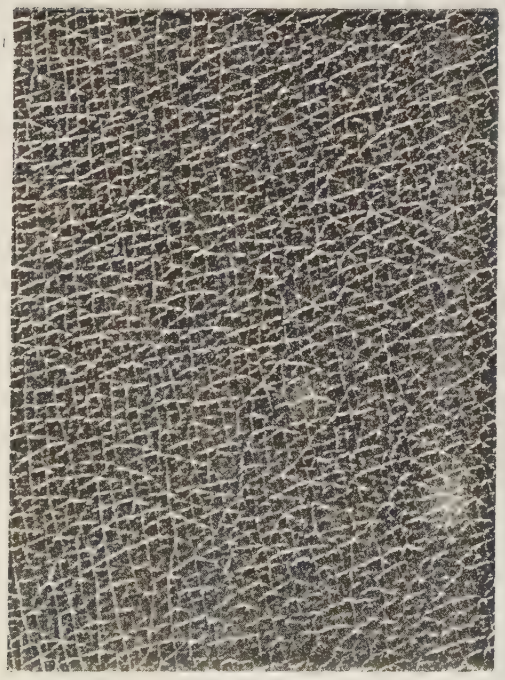
FIG. 25

Regarding the grain: the goatskin used in the preparation of the finest levants has a characteristic large, bold grain and is highly decorative; this is commercially imitated (difficult to detect on a book) by taking a mould from a genuine skin and engraving it on rollers through which an inferior leather is passed.

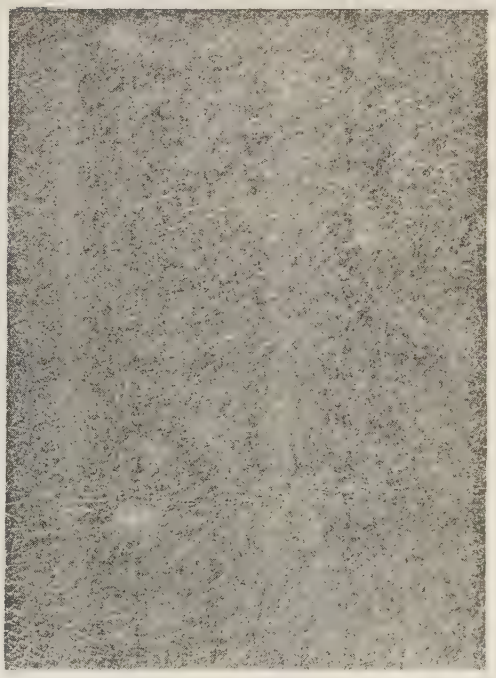
Close examination will show the coarse hair marks on a goatskin to be differently grouped to the closely spaced wool marks evident in a sheepskin. The fibres in the skin of a goat are longer and more tensile than those in the skin of the less

OASIS GOAT

MOROCCO



PIGSKIN



CALFSKIN

PLATE XI. LEATHERS.

active sheep, hence goatskin has better wearing qualities. Pigskin has a characteristic marking and should show the bristle marks irregularly spaced; these again are sometimes imitated on an inoffensive sheepskin which more often masquerades as a crocodile skin or goatskin, than it appears as a sheepskin.

METHODS OF TANNING AND DYEING

Owing to methods entirely different from those formerly used in tanning and dyeing, methods adapted to rapid and cheaper production, modern leather is much poorer in quality.

The demand for "fancy" colors which can be obtained only by distinctly harmful means is another factor.

Everyone seriously interested in binding is recommended to read the report of the Committee on Leather for Bookbinding of the Society of Arts, England. This was published by George Bell and Sons, London, 1900.

In substance this committee found that the great difference in wearing qualities of the leather of the sixteenth century and that of today is due to the following causes:

I. The different methods of tanning and dyeing.
II. Use of free sulphuric acid, seldom properly washed out.
III. Additional hazards to leather owing to modern living conditions.
IV. Demand for highly polished or crushed surface on leather covers.

One mill in England makes leather in accordance with the recommendations of the above committee; we have this leather in use. The range of color obtainable in this grade is small and

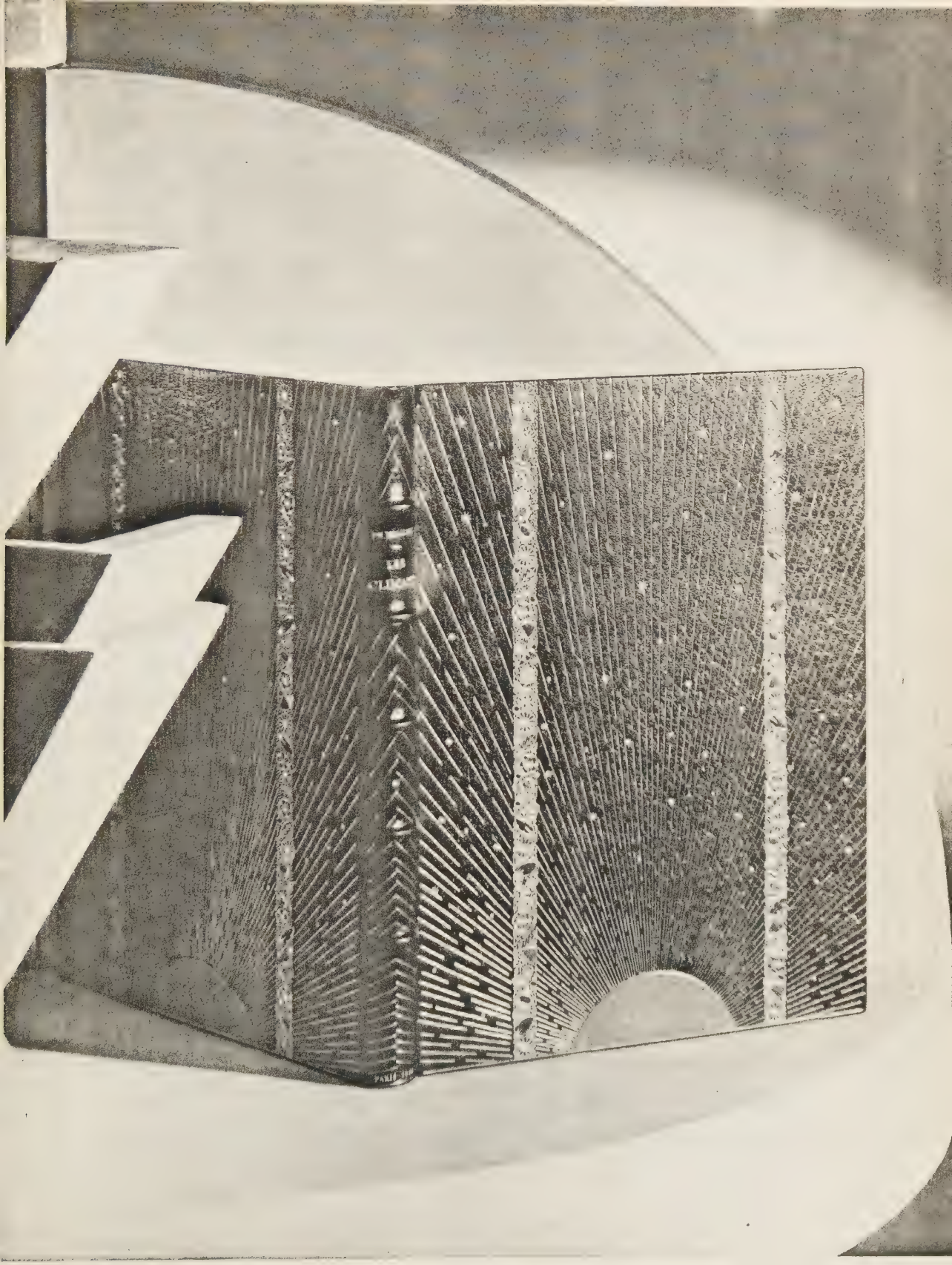


PLATE XII. "LES CLIMATS." ILLUSTRATIONS IN COLOR BY J. L. SCHMIET. BLUE LEVANT. TWO STRAPS INLAID WITH BRILLIANT COLORS.

the colors are duller than those possible by other means of manufacture; it is somewhat more difficult to tool but it will last and is not likely to fade.

The most brilliant colored skins are likely to be the least durable. The duller staple reds, browns, blues, and perhaps some greens are most likely to wear well.

We believe that some of the new French levants now being marketed are being prepared with due consideration to this fact.

Leathers with highly polished and crushed surfaces are frequently demanded by the purchaser. They are not only in poor taste but can be obtained only by methods injurious to the wearing qualities. High polish is sometimes obtained during manufacture by mechanical means, either by a combined crushing and polishing process or by means of crushing with hot highly polished plates, or rollers, and much of the high finish thus obtained is destroyed in the course of handling by the binder and is restored by the repeated use of hot plates and crushing after covering.

Evenness of color is another demand met by detrimental treatment during manufacture. One may well comment here on the fact that a great deal of trouble is taken with the leather (particularly in calfskin bindings) to disguise its even smooth, natural color and grain by staining, marbling, veining and graining, all of which results are obtained by injurious chemicals or hot stamping.

The terms: tree; marbled; sprinkled; basket weave; diced calf; all imply the use of processes of deleterious nature.

It is only fair to say that modern leather is subjected to much worse conditions than was the case in the earlier days.

The worst of these is the variation from extreme damp of the summers to extreme dryness in winter in these days of steam and hot water heating. Gas fumes are a danger, but gas is little used now in American homes.

A report of the Engineering Experiment Station of the University of Illinois in its bulletin No. 141 states that for health and comfort there should be maintained 69° Fahrenheit and a relative humidity of 40 per cent. In a home of 10,000 cubic feet, approximately a small six or seven-room house, it will take an evaporation of 7/10 of a gallon of water per hour or 16.8 gallons per twenty-four hours to maintain this degree of relative humidity. This cannot be attained in the ordinary steam or hot water heated home. Practically the only way is with that type of furnace heat where there is a constant flow of water into a pan above the fire box.* As few of the larger homes have this type of heating, we recommend the industrious use of white vaseline which is one of the best of several preparations; it should be lightly applied, particularly on the joints and at half-year intervals (or oftener according to conditions).

Warping is one of the chief troubles due to indoor atmospheric conditions. The binder aims in bindings to create a very slight warp towards the book. Some covers will be found to curl upwardly and outwardly very badly; this may be due to either insufficient board linings or atmospheric conditions and can, in extreme cases, be remedied by an extra board lining; as the binding gets seasoned the warping becomes less marked. *A place for the rod; if the boards warp outwardly, suspect the binder.*

*It is too soon to state definitely, but experiments being conducted indicate that help is at hand for the hot water or steam heated house at comparatively small expense. If interested, write to us and we will keep you informed as to results.

PLATE XIII. "YANKEE AT COURT OF KING ARTHUR"—MARK TWAIN. PAINTED FORE-EDGE (FROM ILLUSTRATION IN BOOK).

FIG. 26

Newly bound books should not be kept loose in the shelves as in the sketch (*fig.* 26).

Especial care should be taken to guard against keeping books near the ceiling or steam pipes in the wall; books in this position will spread and warp and allow dirt to enter.

One other factor is the importance of using well seasoned boards

Boards are composed of various materials, some, such as the cheap strawboard, made of straw, others made of waste paper often containing miscellaneous scrap. The former may be detected by its ease of bending. We use only well-seasoned rope boards (i. e. made of rope) which are hydraulically pressed and are extremely hard and not easily bent.

Buyers who live in dry, hot houses are recommended to use cloth slip cases for their books. We make a variety of styles of these cases (*fig.* 27); they add greatly to the preservation of their contents and *make dusting so easy that a housemaid can handle and move valuable books with little worry to the collector.*

Such cases are absolutely necessary on books in vellum bindings which are used by the private presses, such as the Doves Press; Kelmscotts, etc, and original bindings of first editions.

FORWARDING SUMMARIZED

Skillful binding is of necessity a matter of compromise, but the compromise should be based on the skillful binder's practical knowledge and not on certain qualities demanded by a buyer with a lack of such knowledge.

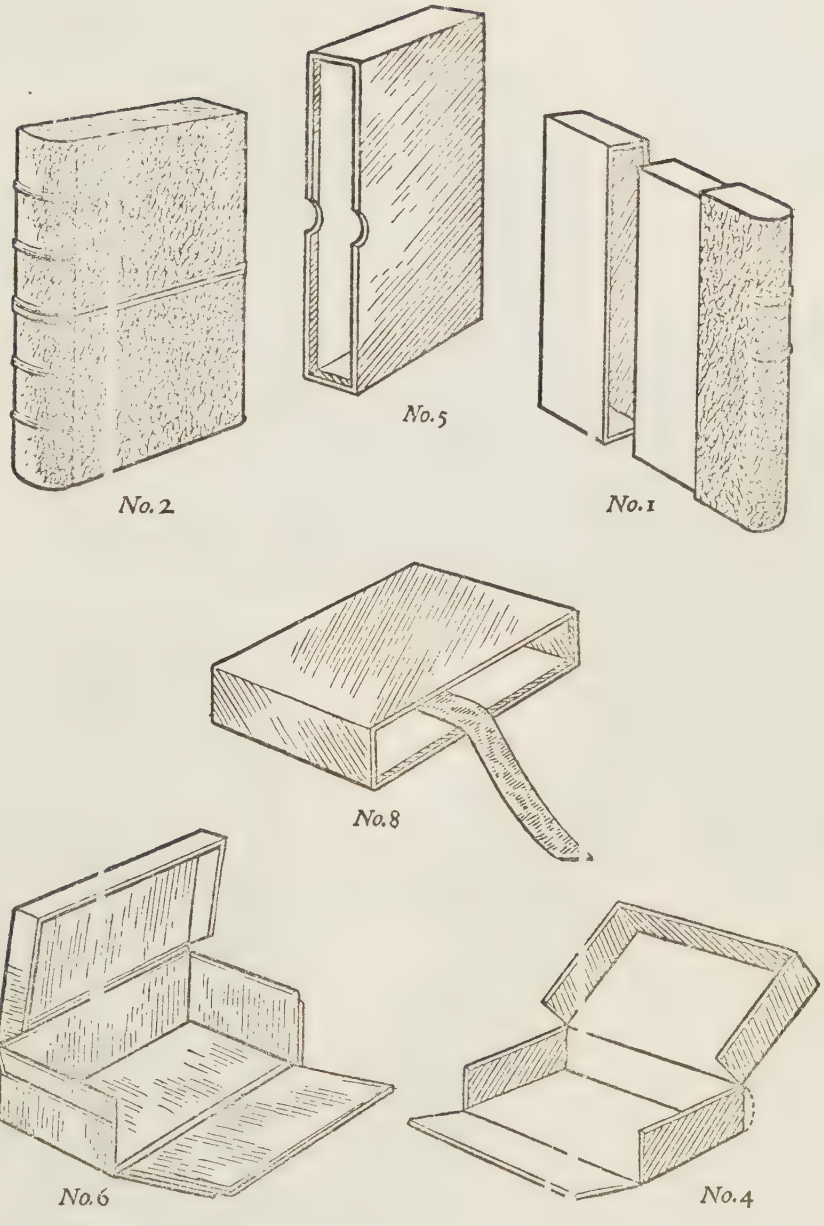


FIG. 27

PLATE XIV. LEFT: "CANTIQUE DES CANTIQUES," WITH ILLUSTRATIONS IN COLOR. MAUVE LEVANT. CENTER: "RUBAIYAT OF OMAR KHAYYAM"—VALE PRESS. DEEP RED LEVANT. RIGHT: "FLOURE AND THE LEAFE"—KELMSCOTT PRESS. BLACK LEVANT.

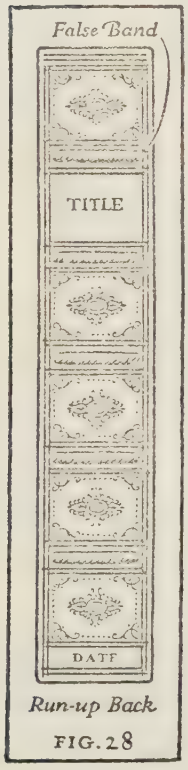
A book must open to be useful and should be made to open comfortably; however, the more easily and freely the book opens, the less the strength and wearing qualities. A cover should throw back easily; yet the more easily it throws back the more paring has been done at the joint and the weaker the book.

Cords laced into the book should not be too apparent, but they must still show unless you sacrifice some strength.

The flatter the back of a flexibly sewn book, the more easily it opens and the more comfortable for reading, but the more likely to become concave as previously shown.

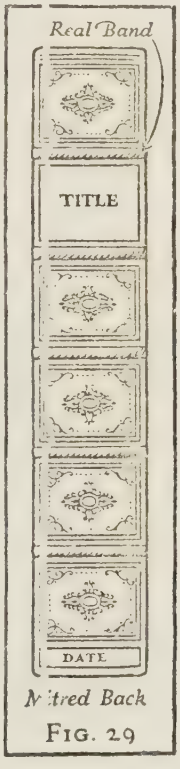
TOOLING

So far we have dealt with what is known as the "forwarding," i. e., the actual binding of the book. The decoration by tooling which may be either in gold or "blind" or a combination of the two, is known as Finishing. Blind tooling is the use of stamps without gold.



Run-up Back
FIG. 28

In finishing, as in forwarding, there are short cuts devised to minimize work and cheapen production. The chief of these is what is known as a "run-up" back in a full gilt back (*fig.* 28) the decoration usually consists of panels (either one or two line) carefully mitered at the corners enclosing the desired tooling (*fig.* 29). Mitering is the joining up of the cor-



Mitred Back
FIG. 29

PLATE XV. HAND TOOLS.

ners of the gold lines forming the panels. In a run-up back the saving is effected by running two lines all the way up each side of the back and omitting the mitering; this again is the easier done in the case of an ordinary sewn book with false bands. An enormous gain in time is obtained in a run-up back.

Further time is gained by using multiple tools (or stamps) which permit quicker work but with a resulting mechanical effect. An unfortunate feature has crept into modern work; the designs on books are sometimes stamped on the sides by a power stamping press, the backs being hand stamped. A step even further is taken by touching in parts of the machine stamped design with hand tools; in other words to simulate hand tooling by disguising the deadly even impression made by machine stamping.

Large editions of such books are now bound up and spread through the United States. Small so-called gift books are the type now often selected for such treatment. These are apt to be regarded as hand-tooled but the price charged gives the answer even to the uninitiated. You can not buy a book with both covers elaborately gold tooled for twenty or twenty-five dollars.

Mechanical precision of work is sometimes demanded and this demand can only result in stultifying the craftsman's effort. Honest book binding is but hand work and hand work has its limitations. This is no excuse for careless or poor workmanship.

To those more deeply interested in the practical side we would recommend a small, inexpensive book written by Douglas Cockerell, entitled: "Bookbinding, and the Care of Books" published by Sir Issac Pitman & Sons, Ltd., London. We use this book in our apprentice school.

PLATE XVI. THREE QUARTER AND FULL BINDINGS.

AS TO DESIGN

Tradition, which serves us so well in construction, again serves us in decoration, but differently. A study of the works of the great outstanding binders of the past centuries reveals continual movement in design. The influence of the activities of the period, the influence of other crafts and even the influence of the country of production have all left their mark, and fresh styles of decoration have been evolved continuously. This is true of the later master binders, each of whom has created and left a distinctive style of design; but whether it be the work of the older or the later masters, one outstanding feature is always evident; they all recognized and were bound by the limitations of their means of production. Modern tendencies, which are influencing all branches of creative work whether it be music, literature or the arts and crafts generally, are equally in evidence in modern binding. We have ventured into new fields of design and we present in these pages some of the flowers plucked therein; regarding them, perhaps, as stepping stones which we trust will lead to the evolution of a distinctly characteristic style of our own.

This book has been written to turn your eye from the false front, brilliant exterior, to the question of construction and wearing qualities, the things that cost a great deal and can only be appreciated by the initiated.

The extra binding department of The Lakeside Press has the good quality, or poor judgment, as you like it, of binding *all books* to last. The value of the book does not affect the kind of materials used nor method of workmanship, although it should make a great difference in the amount of decoration.

[THE END]

De Luxe Protective Cases for the Bibliophile's Choicest

¶ Wide Variety of Designs and Devices Afford Creative Opportunity for Bookbinder's Art and Originality

AN interesting departure from the usual type of de luxe bookbinding work is exemplified in an informative and brightly illustrated booklet recently issued by The Lakeside Press, R. R. Donnelley and Sons Co., Chicago, Ill. The booklet, which is entitled, "Protective Cases for Rare Books," reveals again that there is an almost endless opportunity for creative ideas in the bookbinding field and likewise the extent to which specialization in a particular branch of the art may be feasibly carried. Eight separate types of book boxes are illustrated in line cuts, and a specially constructed book trunk is described in detail.

Protective cases for books, it is pointed out, vary from simple, inexpensive slip cases to elaborate boxes and portfolios built to suit the whim of the individual collector. The purpose of the booklet, it is stated, is to suggest possibilities for the collector, to give him ideas on the variety of cases designed for protecting his prints, manuscripts, and books. Some of the cases are made with asbestos sheeting built into their construction, thus affording a reasonable amount of protection from fire.

Single sheets, such as valuable autographs, letters, deeds, and other papers having matter on both sides can be adequately protected by mounting between mats glazed with cellophane and hinged into either cloth or leather cases.

THE book trunk, described in the booklet, has drawers of different sizes to accommodate large and small books with heavily padded compartments and special pads to go in the top of each drawer. With such a trunk, protected by two Yale locks, it is possible for the collector himself to pack his rare books and to lock them up, thus making certain that the books are handled only by himself and the binder.

As Richard Curle writes, in a quotation printed in the Donnelley booklet, "the value of books does indeed depend tremendously on their condition." So here is an excellent way of maintaining book values.

Among the types of protective cases illustrated are the following:

Cloth slip case with ribbon pull, suitable for protecting the sides and edges of books, where the book of the book can be left exposed.

Cloth slip case with plain lined cloth wrapper, where it is desired to protect the book with a wrapper and to insert in slip case. This wrapper is lettered.

Cloth slip case with portfolio wrapper, suitable for enclosing manuscripts, proof sheets, or books in loose signatures. Box is lettered.

Closed cloth case with drop side, made with flat or round back. Suitable for containing mounted prints, manuscripts, or books.

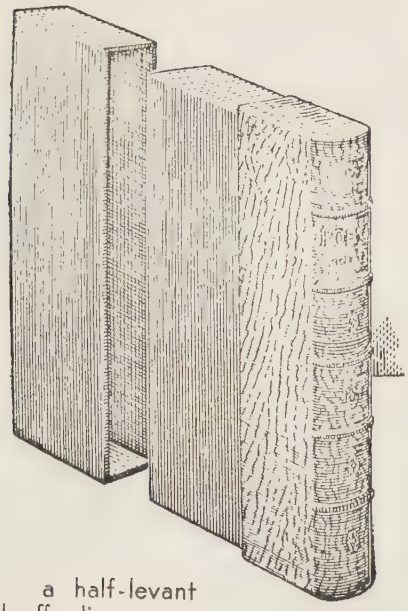
Half levant closed box with drop side, with or without round back or bands. Suitable for containing books, prints, or manuscripts.

Half levant slip case with plain or portfolio wrapper to protect books or manuscripts.

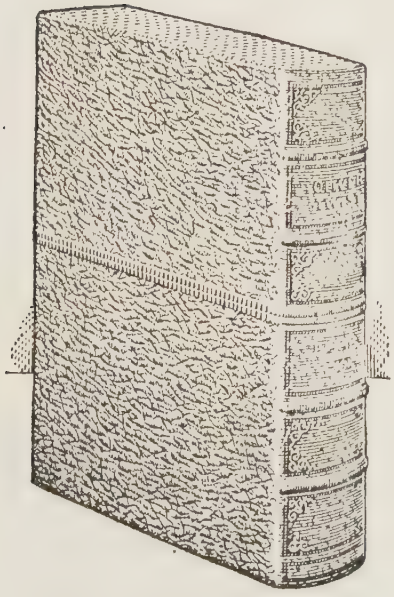
Half levant pull-off slip case, affording a complete box covering for rare and valuable books.

Full levant pull-off slip case, often termed solander.

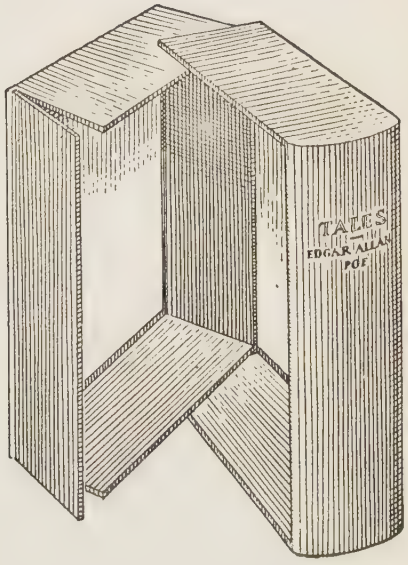
A Group of Individual BOOK SAFES



a half-levant pull-off slip case,

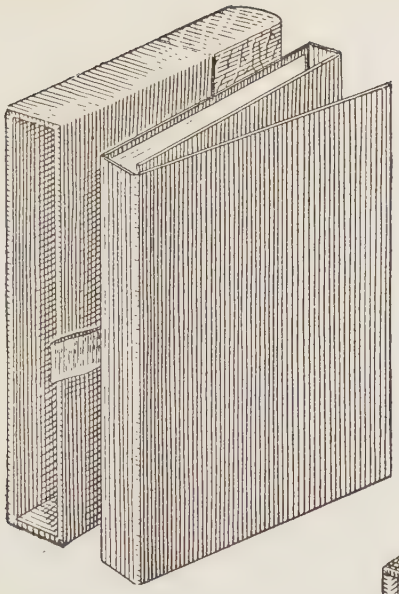


a full-levant pull-off slip case,

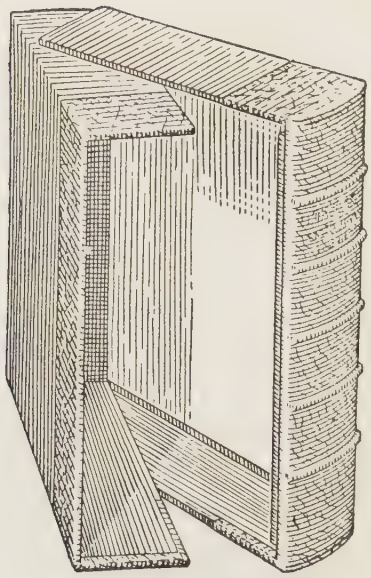


a closed cloth case with drop side,

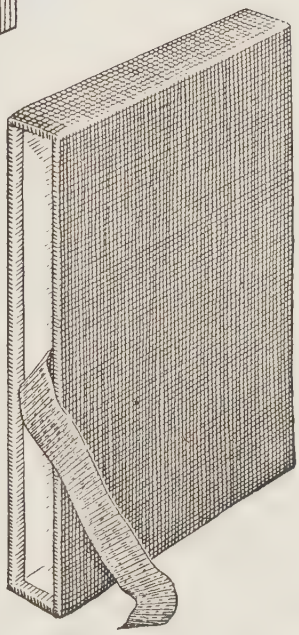
These protective cases for rare books were designed at The Lakeside Press in Chicago.



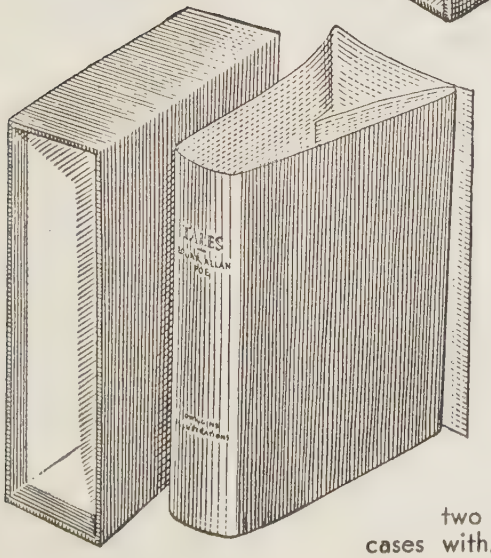
a half-levant slip case with wrapper,

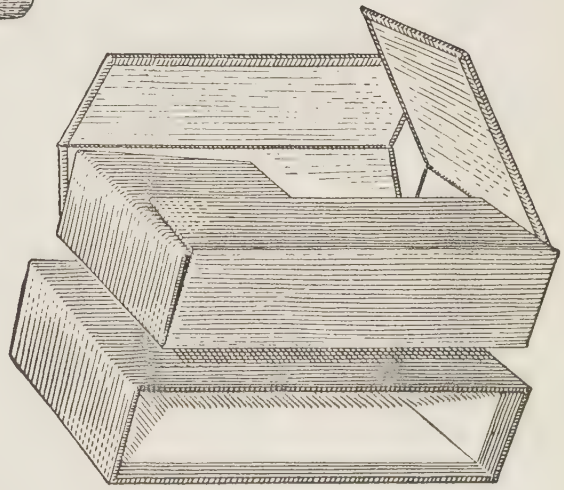


a half-levant closed box with drop side.

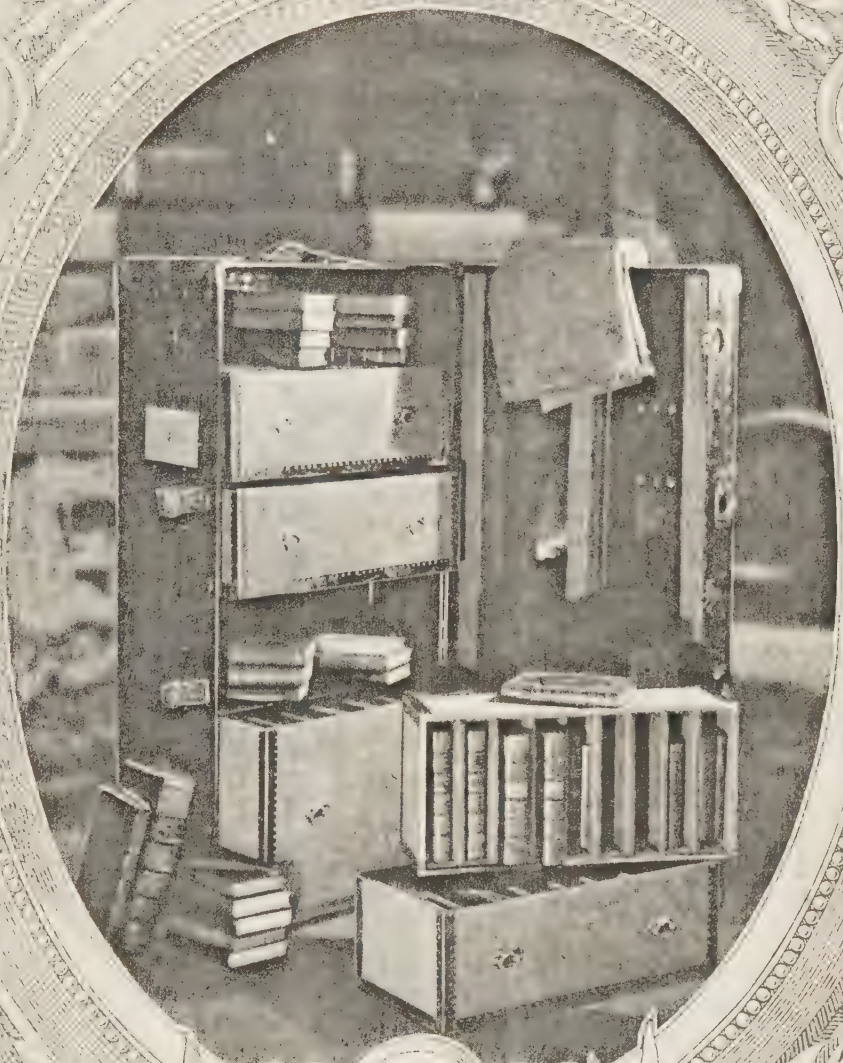


a cloth slip case with ribbon pull



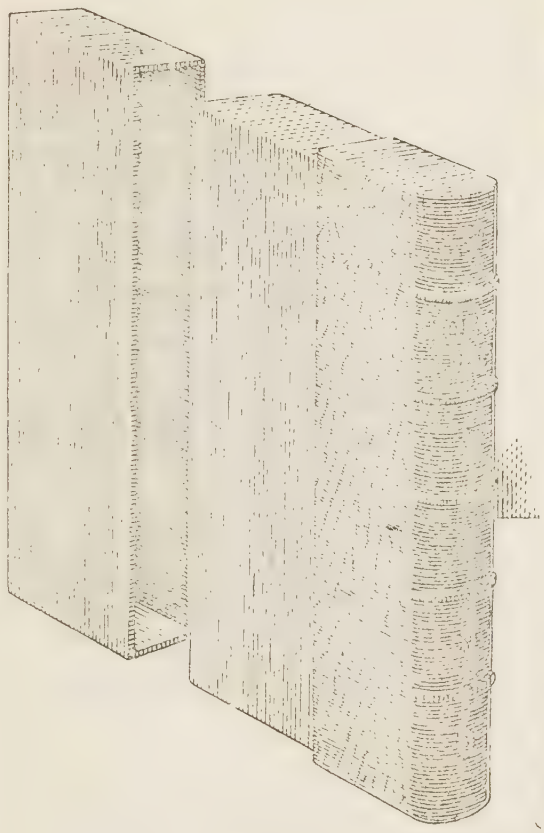


two cloth slip cases with, respectively, a plain lined cloth wrapper and a portfolio wrapper.



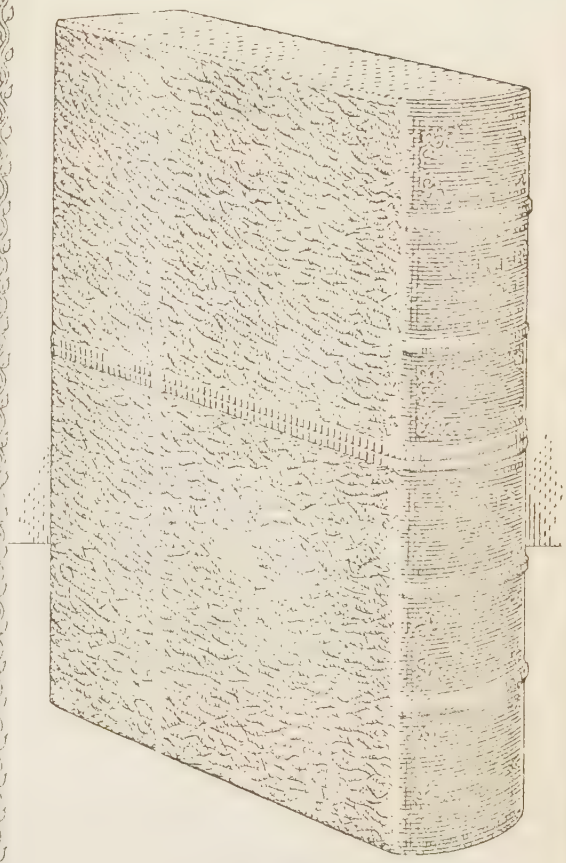
Protective Cases

FOR RARE BOOKS



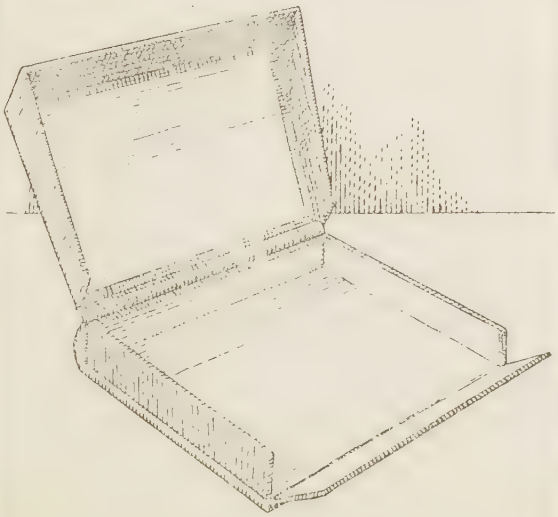
No. 1

HALF MOROCCO PULL-OFF SLIP CASE



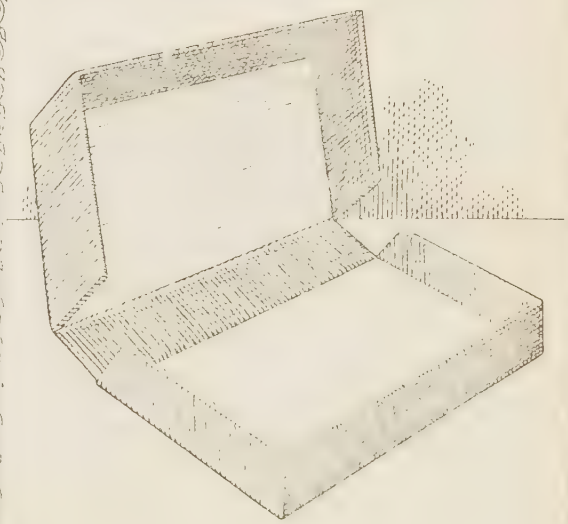
No. 2

FULL MOROCCO PULL-OFF SLIP CASE



No. 3

CLOTH BOX CASE, ROUND BACK, FALL FRONT



No. 4

CLOTH BOX CASE, SQUARE BACK, FALL BACK

Manuscripts First Editions & Association Items

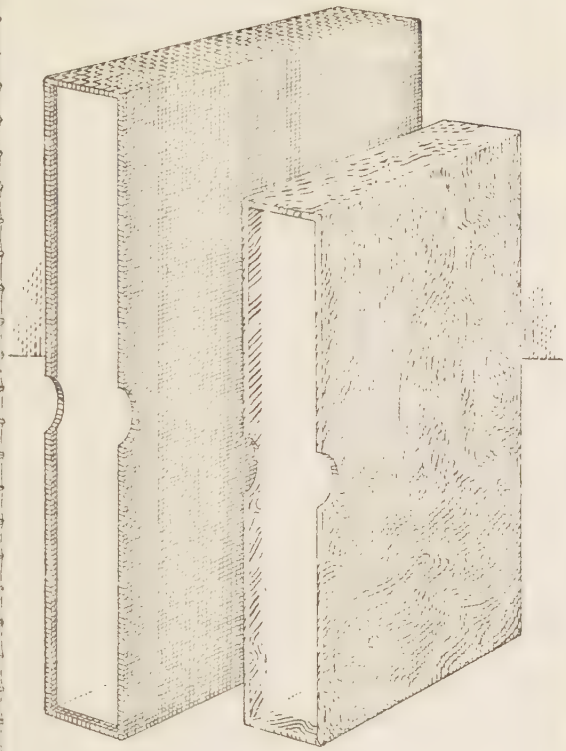
The discriminating collector will usually wish to preserve these items without altering their original state. For this purpose the Extra Binding Department of R. R. Donnelley & Sons Company have devised protective cases in eight different styles which may be made in as simple or elaborate fashion as the taste and pocketbook of the collector may suggest.

An examination of the illustrations presented herewith will suggest to the collector appropriate containers for different rarities. These boxes are available in leather or cloth, and may be finished plain or hand-tooled. They are specially constructed to fit the material enclosed, and fit on a library shelf agreeably with books in fine bindings.

Permanently Preserved

autographed letters, loose manuscripts, proof sheets, prints, and photographs may be permanently preserved in book boxes or leather cases better than in any other way.

Where it is desirable to keep first editions and association books in their original state, they may be kept in book boxes without fear of wear or injury. The collector's attention is called to the eight styles of attractive cases illustrated in this circular. These are devised to suit the individual taste of the client. In addition to these book boxes, the Extra Binding Department of R. R. Donnelley & Sons Company engages in the making of the finest full leather and three-quarter binding in which the finest materials and construction are used to make bindings beautiful and enduring. Correspondence is invited and prices will be furnished on request.

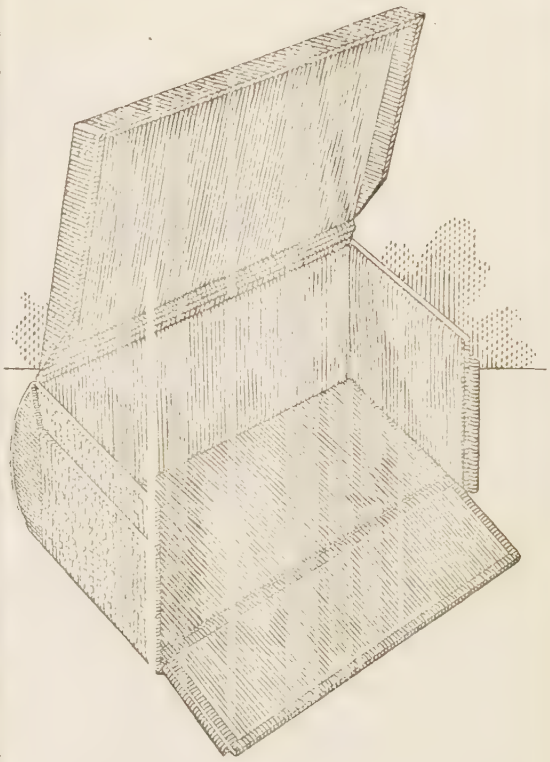


No. 5A No. 5B

5A. CLOTH COVERED SLIP CASE, WITH THUMB HOLE

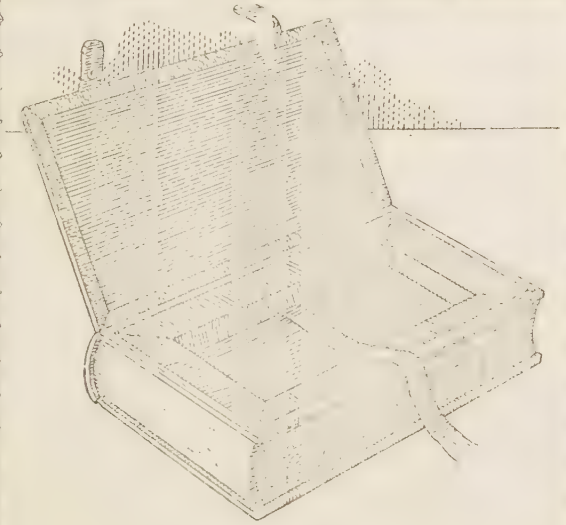
5B. PAPER COVERED SLIP CASE, WITH THUMB HOLE

If desired, the above can be supplied with a cloth wrapper in addition; the title being tooled on the case.



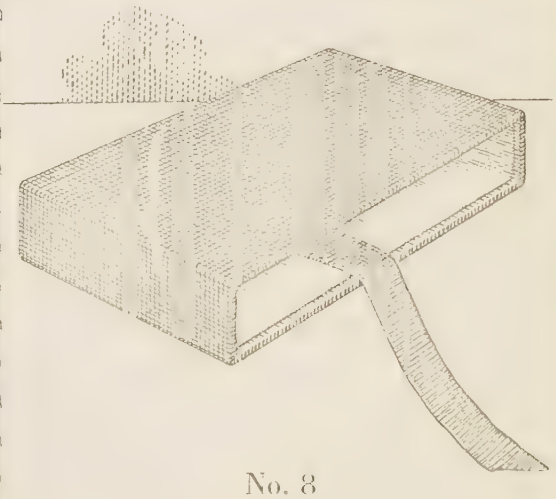
No. 6

HALF MOROCCO CASE WITH FALL FRONT



No. 7

FULL MOROCCO CASE, PADDED AND SILK LINED



No. 8

CLOTH COVERED SLIP CASE, WITH RIBBON PULL

If desired, the above can be supplied with a cloth wrapper in addition; the title being tooled on the case.

Booklovers

BIBLIOPHILES AND COLLECTORS

are now offered the convenience of a specially constructed book trunk for transporting their rare books from their libraries to the binders. This trunk of extra strong construction, with drawers having padded compartments for the most perfect protection of books in transit, will be sent empty to the home of book collectors who desire to have bindings or attractive cases made for their choice manuscripts and books.

The trouble and annoyance of packing books in wooden boxes for insecure shipment to the binders may now be done away with. With this trunk opened in your library, it is possible for the collector himself to pack his books and to lock them up, as the trunk is protected with two Yale locks. Where a sufficient number of books are to be dealt with, this trunk will be sent on request to the collector prepaid. The keys come with it, and by this procedure it is possible that the books are handled only by the owner of the books himself and the binder who supplies the bindings or attractive cases.

The construction of this trunk permits drawers of different size to hold books from small to large. The compartments are heavily padded and special pads are supplied to go in the top of each one of the drawers. The illustration on the first page of this circular shows the trunk open and gives a good idea of its interior arrangement. By this means, it is now possible to transport books of great value, over great distances, with the maximum of speed and security.

Collectors are invited to avail themselves of this service by communicating with us by telegraph, telephone, or letter.

Department of Extra Binding

THE LAKESIDE PRESS

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